Frantz Fanon’s philosophy and psychoanalytic analyses focus solely on men and are constructed through rigid categories of gender. **Bergner:** Gwen Bergner PhD professor at Princeton University; “Who Is That Masked Woman? or, The Role of Gender in Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks”; Jan 1995; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/463196.pdf?_=1460733519163>; Accessed 4/15/16; PE

Though **[in] Black Skin, White Masks** is a founda- tional text for reconfiguring psychoanalysis to ac- count for race, Fanon, like Freud, takes the male as the norm. For the exemplary colonized subject, **Fanon uses the term le noir** 'the black man.' **This masculine "universal" refers not to humankind generally**, however, **but to actual men-since Fanon describes these colonized subjects as studying in Paris, lusting after white women, and competing with white men for intellectual recognition**. The French-educated Martinican who appropriates the superiority of the colonizing culture by ostenta- tiously wielding proper French is, by assumption, male: "When he marries, his wife will be aware that she is marrying a joke" 'marie, sa femme saura qu'elle epouse une histoire' (25; 39). That **Fanon's "universal" subject describes the colonized male in particular indicates that racial identities intersect with sexual difference**. **Fanon** does not ignore sexual difference altogether, but he **explores sexual- ity's role in constructing race only through rigid categories of gender**. **In Black Skin, White Masks, women are consid- ered as subjects almost exclusively in terms of their sexual relationships with men**; feminine de- sire is thus defined as an overly literal and limited (hetero)sexuality. But though feminine subjectivity clearly deserves broader description, the dimen- sions of its confinement within Black Skin, White Masks indicate the architecture of raced masculin- ity and femininity in the colonial context. So while it is not surprising that **Fanon, writing** in the early fifties, **takes the masculine as the nor**m, it is neces- sary not only to posit alternative representations of femininity but also to consider how his account of normative raced masculinity depends on the pro- duction or exclusion of femininities. By examining the role of gender in Black Skin, White Masks, **I aim to broaden Fanon's outline** of black women's subjectivity and to work toward delineating the in- terdependence of race and gender. Although they may emanate from a common construction of oth- erness in psychoanalytic discourses,6 **racial differ- ence and sexual difference intersect** and interact in contextually variable ways that preclude separate or determinist description.7 Relying on feminist psychoanalytic theory as a model for revising the discourse of psychoanalysis from within, I hope to review Fanon's construction of gender while illu- minating the contributions of his psychoanalytic framework of racial identity. Fanon's almost mythical significance for post- colonial theorists and, more recently, for others gesturing toward multicultural contexts nearly fore- stalls a gender critique of Black Skin, White Masks. In an article tracing Fanon's recuperation as a "global theorist," Gates notes that Fanon is mobi- lized as an "ethnographic construct" and is used as "both totem and text" to model a "unified theory of oppression" (459, 457, 470). Figuring Fanon as transcultural and transhistorical means that "in the course of an appeal for the specificity of the Other, we discover that [Fanon as the] global theorist of alterity is emptied of his own specificity" (459). These invocations do not lead to critical analyses of his work but make the colonial paradigm the "last bastion for the project, and dream, of global the- ory" (469-70). According to Gates, pressing Fanon into the service of a "global theory" of colonialism produces either a "sentimental romance of alterity" complete with a utopian vision of fully achieved in- dependence from the colonial relation or a concep- tion of that relation as a closed, inescapable system. For Gates, these incompatible positions structure the central conflict within colonial discourse the- ory: the tension between utopian narratives of liber- ation and deterministic models of subject formation and discourse formation. **To unlock this binary, Gates proposes a more grounded** **approach** **that would "historicize" Fanon** through biographical critique. Gates would weigh, for example, reports that Fanon did not identify with and even found distasteful the common people of the cultures he championed theoretically and politically. This recourse to the "factual" authority of biog- raphy may demythologize the man but does not disprove his theory or resolve the dilemmas of co- lonial discourse analysis. **Fanon's alienation from the local and the "low" is in fact the subject of Black Skin, White Masks; the dialectic between solidarity with and alienation from the colonized population is integral to his analysis** of the colo- nially educated black man's psychology. **Rather than historicize Fanon, I want to challenge post- colonialism's uses of him and to encourage a deeper engagement with issues of gender-**not to consti- tute a better "unified theory of oppression" (Gates 470) but **to question the dominant practice of "separate but equal" psychoanalytic discourses of race and gender**

Frantz Fanon treats women as objects of a material economy- they are no more than a symbol of power for Black Men. **Bergner:** Gwen Bergner PhD professor at Princeton University; “Who Is That Masked Woman? or, The Role of Gender in Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks”; Jan 1995; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/463196.pdf?_=1460733519163>; Accessed 4/15/16; PE

If **feminine** **subjectivity**-black and white-**is largely absent from Black Skin, White Mask**s, **women are nonetheless crucial to Fanon's formulation of raced masculine subject formation**. **Though for Fanon colonial identity forms out of the mirroring relation between white men and black men, this process is played out through the bodies of women**. In other words, **women** (both black and white) **mediate between black** men **and white men**, enabling the differentiation of mascu- line subject positions according to race. **Fanon writes** of "**the Negro who wants to go to bed with a white woman**" 'celui qui cherche a coucher avec la Blanche' (14; 30) **that "there is clearly a wish to be white**. **A lust for revenge**, in any case" 'un desir d'etre Blanc. Une soif de vengeance, en tout cas' (14; 31). **The** black **man's** ostensibly **heterosexual interracial** **desire** **becomes an act** **of** both **identification** with and resistance to the white man. Mani- festly **interracial heterosexual desire here masks interracial homosocial fear** and desire. White men's competition with black men for social au- thority is also played out on sexual terrain; white men articulate a fear of racial difference through concern about black men's influence over white women's bodies: "Our women are at the mercy of the Negroes" 'Nos femmes par les negres' (157; 148). Sexual practices are a locus for the exercise of power (both oppressive and resistive) be- tween men. Classic texts in anthropology (on kinship pat- terns), psychoanalysis (on the Oedipus complex), and Marxism (on women's role in the reproduction of the labor force) suggest that culture is structured by the circulation of women among men according to historically and culturally specific patterns. Fem- inist critics have highlighted the ways that such "trafficking in women," to use Gayle Rubin's term, establishes and institutionalizes the oppression of women. Referring to the work of Freud and Levi- Strauss, among others, Luce Irigaray writes, "The passage into the social order, into the symbolic order, into order as such, is assured by the fact that men, or groups of men, circulate women among themselves, according to a rule known as the incest taboo" (170). In addition to a sex-gender economy that organizes men into social groups through the distribution of women, **there is an economy** regu- lating **the distribution of women** so as to construct and perpetuate racial groupings. In the colonial context, the operative "law" determining the circu- lation of women among white men and black men is the miscegenation taboo, which ordains that white men have access to black women but that black men be denied access to white women. Both incest and miscegenation taboos enforce culturally dictated categories of permitted and prohibited sex- ual relations. But the race-sex economy of colo- nialism also produces a hierarchical relation between the groups of men it delineates. **The traffic in women not only describes an economy of heterosexuality but also marks a con- junction of the sexual economy with the material economy**. Irigaray articulates the correspondence between women and wealth, gender and goods, by way of Marxist commodity theory: The exchange of women as goods accompanies and stimulates exchanges of other "wealth" among groups of men. The economy-in both the narrow and the broad sense- . .. requires that women lend them- selves to alienation in consumption, and to exchanges in which they do not participate. (172) Women's economic function as commodities circles back to the symbolic realm, however; the value of women lies not in their use but in their possession. **Woman thus becomes an abstraction, a symbol**; she "has value only in that she can be ex- changed" (176). And such symbolic abstraction reintroduces desire: "Man endows the commodi- ties he produces with a narcissism that blurs the seriousness of utility, of use. Desire, as soon as there is exchange, 'perverts' need" (177). **On a symbolic level men's desire for women is a product of and is**, in a sense, **subordinate to a homosocial matrix**. Women are "fetish-objects," Irigaray contends, "inasmuch as, in exchanges, they are the manifestation and the circulation of a power of the Phallus, establishing relationships of men with each other" (183). If women function as commodities mediating so- cial and symbolic relationships among men, then colonialism may be contested largely through the ability of black men and white men to control the exchange of "their" women. For example, white men succeed in colonizing black men to the extent that they are not subject to black men's dictates re- garding "their" (black men's) women (i.e., black women).19 This **relation between colonial power and the circulation of women reveals Fanon's scathing condemnation of black women's desire** in the second chapter of Black Skin, White Masks, "The Woman of Color and the White Man" ("La femme de couleur et le Blanc"), as illustrative, in part, of **his own desire to circumscribe black women's sexuality and economic autonomy in order [is] to ensure the patriarchal authority of black men.**

Fanon deems that any attempt for black women to gain power is a form of mimicry. **Bergner:** Gwen Bergner PhD professor at Princeton University; “Who Is That Masked Woman? or, The Role of Gender in Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks”; Jan 1995; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/463196.pdf?_=1460733519163>; Accessed 4/15/16; PE

"The Woman of Color and the White Man" and its correlative chapter, "The Man of Color and the White Woman" ("L'homme de couleur et la Blanche"), provide a gendered comparison of the desire of some colonized blacks to inhabit white- ness through a sociosexual relationship with a white partner. Doane links this psychosexual de- sire to mimicry: The black's confrontation with whiteness is automati- cally pathological and most frequently takes the form of a certain mimicry. This mimicry is characteristic of both sexes and Fanon devotes a separate chapter to each, making his analysis circulatearound a literary text in each instance. ("Dark Continents" 219) Apparently common to both men and women, this mimetic dynamic seems to operate somewhat dif- ferently in each sex: In analyzing Je suis Martiniquaise and Nini, we have seen how the Negress behaves with the white man. Through a novel by Rene Maran-which seems to be autobiographical-let us try to understand what hap- pens when the man is black and the woman white.21 (64) Avec l'analyse de Je suis Martiniquaise et Nini, nous avons vu comment se comportait la negresse vis-a-vis du Blanc. Avec un roman de Rend Maran,-autobi- ographie, semble-t-il, de l'auteur,-tachons de com- prendre ce qui se passe dans le cas des Noirs. (72) That **Fanon** here takes note of gender difference in the construction and practice of sexuality seems remarkable since this section is the only one in Black Skin, White Masks that does not posit the black man as the universal example of black sub- jectivity. Elsewhere in the text, Fanon perfuncto- rily **addresses his exclusion of black women: "Those who grant our conclusions** on the psycho- sexuality **of the white woman may ask what we have to say about the woman of color. I know nothing about her**" 'Admettant nos conclusions sur la psychosexualite de la femme blanche, on pour- rait nous demander celles que nous proposerions pour la femme de couleur, Nous n'en savons rien' (179-80; 165). **Even the chapter on black women's specificity begins with the masculine universal**: Man is motion toward the world and toward his like ... a movement of love, a gift of self, the ultimate stage of what by common accord is called ethical ori- entation.... [T]rue, authentic love ... entails the mo- bilization of psychic drives basically freed of unconscious conflict. (41) L'homme est mouvement vers le monde et vers son semblable ... mouvement d'amour, don de soi, terme final de ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler l'orientation dthique.... [L]'amour vrai, rdel ... requiert la mo- bilisation d'instances psychiques fondamentalement liberees des conflits inconscients. (53) **Framing** **desire as a matter of truth** and ethics not only **contradicts** the psychoanalytic definition of desire as unconscious and thus amoral but also sets an **impossible test for black women**-a test they are predestined to fail, since "[i]n this chapter de- voted to the relations between the woman of color and the European" 'dans ce chapitre consacre aux rapports de la femme de couleur et de l'Europeen,' it is yet to be seen only "to what extent authentic love will remain unascertainable before one has purged oneself of that feeling of inferiority ... or overcompensation" 'dans quelle mesure l'amour authentique demeurera impossible tant que ne seront pas expulses ce sentiment d'infdriorite ... cette surcompensation'(42; 53-54; my emphasis). Fanon's reference, in the next sentence, to Mayotte Capecia's autobiography makes clear that it is specifically a woman who needs purging: "For after all we have a right to be perturbed when we read in Je suis Martiniquaise: 'I should have liked to be married, but to a white man'" 'Parce qu'en- fin, quand nous lisons dans Je suis Martiniquaise: "J'aurais voulu me marier, mais avec un Blanc . ." nous sommes en droit d'etre inquiet' (42; 54). Doane also notes this shift between the univer- sal masculine pronoun and references to a specific woman in the chapter's opening. She writes that "[t]he constant slippage of pronouns here-from 'she' to the generic 'he' indicating the black man in general-signals the extent to which Fanon sees the black woman's desire as representative of a black pathology which he despises" ("Dark Conti- nents" 219). I would argue, however, that the slip- page indicates not that Fanon means Capecia to be representative of all blacks but rather that he makes a concerted-if tortuous-effort to confine this pathology to black women. Fanon excludes Capecia from his narrative point of view ("we" are "perturbed" because of her), aligns the reader with his own masculine subject position, and renders the black woman-rather than the white man-the demonized other. He condemns Capecia for her perceived submission to racist ideology: One day a woman named Mayotte Capdcia, obeying a motivation whose elements are difficult to detect, sat down to write 202 pages-her life-in which the most ridiculous ideas proliferated at random.... For me, all circumlocution is impossible: Je suis Martini- quaise is cut-rate merchandise, a sermon in praise of corruption. (42) Un jour, une femme du nom de Mayotte Capdcia, obdissant a un motif dont nous apercevons mal les tenants, a dcrit deux cent deux pages-sa vie-oi se multipliaient a loisir les propositions les plus absur- des.... Pour nous, aucune dquivoque n'est possible: Je suis Martiniquaise est un ouvrage au rabais, pr6- nant un comportement malsain. (54) And he resorts to name-calling: May she add no more to the mass of her imbecilities. Go in peace, mudslinging storyteller.... (53n12) Qu'elle n'enfle plus le proces du poids de ses imbeci- lites. Partez en paix, 6 6claboussante romanciere.... (62n12) Typically, contemporary readers dismiss Fanon's condemnation as so obviously sexist that it does not merit analysis. But the terms of Fanon's cen- sure reveal much about the economy of gender, class, and sexuality that binds black women. Fanon belittles Capecia's life story in terms of eco- nomic worth ("cut-rate merchandise") and sexual morality ("a sermon in praise of corruption")-the charges conventionally brought against women's writing and other assertions of feminine auton- omy.22 Indeed, Capecia's autobiography reveals that she exercises an "unfeminine" agency in the literary, sexual, and economic arenas. During Capecia's adolescence, her mother dies and her father installs a young mistress-Capecia's own age-in the household while committing his daughter to Cinderella-like drudgery. Capecia achieves social and economic independence from her father by working as a laundress. And though she romanticizes her relationship with the white French soldier whose mistress she eventually be- comes, the liaison is the only means apparent to her of improving her material and social conditions. While Fanon denounces Capecia as unfaithful to her race, she frames her domestic arrangement as the best of her circumscribed options, preferable to marrying a Martinican black man, since she be- lieves any black man is likely to be unfaithful to her, as her father was to his young mistress. Although Capecia sometimes-but not always- lapses into valorizing whiteness in her aspirations to privilege, her sociosexual behavior is largely in- fluenced by the economic and sexual politics of a racist, patriarchal society.23 She states that her oc- cupation as a laundress is one of the few available to single black women in Martinique, aside from prostitution. But citing Capecia's professed plea- sure at succeeding with her implicitly white clien- tele, Fanon claims that her choice of employment merely reflects a desire "to bleach" 'blanchir' her- self white (45; 56). By restricting his analysis of the gendered imperatives that women respond to in their sexual investments, **Fanon overlooks the ways in which colonial society perpetuates racial in- equality through structures of sexual difference**. **He sees women's economic and sexual choices as em- anating from some psychic dimension of the erotic that is disconnected from material reality**. Ironi- cally, such a decontextualized analysis of black femininity re-creates the structure of the colonialist discourse Fanon successfully deconstructs in much of Black Skin, White Masks. Fanon's castigation of Capecia (he compares her to the eugenicist Gobineau) contrasts markedly with his sympathy for her male counterpart, Jean Veneuse, the protagonist of Maran's novel Un homme pareil aux autres and the subject of Fa- non's chapter "The Man of Color and the White Woman." Like Capecia, Veneuse valorizes Euro- pean culture, feels racial inferiority, and wants a white spouse. And yet Fanon absolves Veneuse of responsibility for preferring whiteness and for col- luding in the colonial enterprise by working as a French administrator in Africa; Fanon likens Veneuse's situation as an educated black man in racist France to that of "the lamb to be slaugh- tered" 'l'homme a abattre' (66; 73). While Ca- pecia is reduced to a racial type, the "Negress" 'negresse' who "has only one possibility and one concern: to turn white" 'n'a qu'une possibilite et un souci: blanchir' (54; 64), Veneuse is an unraced and ungendered individual who "repre- sents not an example of black-white relations, but a certain mode of behavior in a neurotic who by coincidence is black" 'ne represente pas une ex- perience des rapports noir-blanc, mais une certaine facon pour un nevrose, accidentellement noir' (79; 84). By conferring on Veneuse the "status" of a race-neutral neurosis, Fanon locates racial identity outside Veneuse's essential self.24 Race serves only coincidentally as a conduit for Veneuse's neu- rotic anxiety. To explain Fanon's intolerance of Capecia and sympathy for Veneuse, Doane suggests that "[t]he white mask is most perceptible as a mask in the case of the woman of color who seems more at home in the realm of mimicry" ("Dark Continents" 220). But why is the white mask more perceptible on the woman of color, and why does mimicry be- come, in effect, her domestic space?25 The differ- ence between Capecia and Veneuse lies not in their valuation of whiteness but in their claim to white- ness. In Fanon's terms Capecia-as a working- class black woman-can aspire to an unattainable whiteness only by aligning herself with a white man, whereas Veneuse has successfully internal- ized a white European identity through intellect, acculturation, and class privilege. Veneuse's racial self-alienation is forced on him by whites who in- sist that he is different despite his "white" identity: "Jean Veneuse is not a Negro and does not wish to be a Negro. And yet, without his knowledge, a gulf has been created" 'Jean Veneuse n'est pas un negre, ne veut pas etre un negre. Pourtant, a son insu, il s'est produit un hiatus' (71; 77). **Black women- even educated, upper-class black women-cannot make the same claim to intellectual** and social equality **with white men that educated**, **professional black men can. Thus black women's attempts to inhabit a whiteness that Fanon consistently defines in masculine terms becomes mimicry, a feminine masquerade both of race and of gender.**

Your discourse is terrible. Debate judges are educators in intellectual thought spaces- means you reject representations that justify violence and oppression. **Gill**:[[1]](#footnote-1)

Too many intellectuals subscribe to or create orthodoxy that simply reinforces dominant power-knowledge structures. Others simply ignore fundamental problems of authority and violence and, as such, indirectly subordinate themselves to dominant power. By contrast, this chapter has been written from the viewpoint of a critical theory that seeks to develop a new transnational historical materialist approach.So, from a critical perspective, what is the role and duty of critical intellectuals? First, they must provide a clear and realistic analysis of the nature and logicof contemporary developments. Second, they must speak out critically on the basis of their freedom to demand respect for questions of justice. Third, they must oppose all patterns of domination that destroy the creative human spirit. And finally, they must find ways to develop new critical perspectives. And at a time of social crisis, where social and political thought seems to be at an impasse as it stands transfixed before the dilemmas of globalization, intellectuals need to use their creative imagination. They need to help us to rethink the potentials in society that allow for creativity and greater human possibility

*Epistemologically, discursive criticisms come first because they skew our ability to understand and create knowledge. Doty[[2]](#footnote-2)*

*This study begins with the premise that representation is an inherent and important aspect of global political life and therefore a critical and legitimate area of inquiry. International relations are inextricably bound up with discursive practices that put into circulation representations that are taken as "truth." The goal of analyzing these practices is not to reveal essential truths that have been obscured, but rather to examine how certain representations underlie the production of knowledge and, identities and how these representations make various courses of action possible****. As Said (1979: 21) notes, there is no such thing as a delivered presence, but there is a re-presence, or representation.*** *Such an assertion does not deny the existence of the material world, but rather suggests that material objects and subjects are constituted as such within discourse.  So, for example, when U.S. troops march into Grenada, this is certainly "real,"**though the march of troops across a piece of geographic space is in itself singularly uninteresting and socially irrelevant outside of the representations that produce meaning. It is only when "American" is attached to the troops and "Grenada" to the geographic space that meaning is created. What the physical behavior itself is, though, is still far from certain until discursive practices constitute it as* ***an "****invasion," a "show of force," a "training exercise," a "rescue," and so on. What is "really" going on in such a situation is inextricably linked to the discourse within which it is located****.*** *To attempt a neat separation between discursive and nondiscursive practices, understanding the former as purely linguistic, assumes a series of dichotomies—thought/reality****,*** *appearance/essence, mind/matter, word/world, subjective/objective—that a critical genealogy calls into question. Against this, the perspective taken here affirms the material and' performative character of discourse. 'In suggesting that global politics, and specifically the aspect that has to do with relations between the North and the South, is linked to representational practices I am suggesting that the issues and concerns that constitute these relations occur within a "reality" whose content has for the most part been defined by the representational practices of the “first world”.* ***Focusing on discursive practices enables one to examine how the processes that produce "truth" and "knowledge"*** *work* ***and how they are articulated with the exercise of*** *political, military, and economic* ***power.***

1. Stephen Gill, professor of political science at York University, *Questioning Geopolitics*, p. 130-131 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 96, assistant professor of political science at Arizona State University Roxanne Lynn, imperial encounters, 1996, p. 5-6 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)